

a platform such as has been suggested by Mr. Cleveland."

No one can misunderstand that statement. If the gold democrats have the majority in the democratic national convention the democratic party will declare in favor of the single gold standard and will be delivered, bound and gagged, into the merciless keeping of the powerful interests that have controlled the republican party and by that control have dominated the affairs of the nation.

Are democrats willing that this program shall be carried out?

The Beef Trust's Work.

Representative Martin of South Dakota, speaking before the house committee on interstate commerce, made an interesting showing concerning the operations of the beef trust. According to Mr. Martin's statement the facts appear to be as follows:

The price of cattle since early in 1903 fell until last December, when it reached the lowest price in five years.

The price of dressed beef during the first six months of 1903 correspondingly declined; but about the 1st of July it began to recover, and during the fall of 1903 it reached a point, at which the spread between the price of cattle and dressed beef was from \$12 to \$15—a difference greater than any preceding record.

Dressed beef is bringing as much now as in 1901, while cattle are much lower.

Consequently, there is a great loss to producers of cattle in the west. Many of the stockmen have become embarrassed at the present condition of affairs, which cannot be attributed to natural causes.

The foreign market for American beef is good, and the local market is probably the best in many years.

In August, 1903, the price of dressed beef was \$8.37½ per 100 pounds, although it cost but \$5.17 on the hoof.

In February, 1901, dressed beef sold at the same price, but beef on the hoof cost \$6.50.

In one instance a cattle raiser shipped a consignment to the Chicago stock yards. He found no competition whatever, and, in fact, the absence of a real market. This cattle raiser called upon the various concerns, but secured a bid from only one. He finally accepted this. His curiosity had been aroused, and he resolved to see what the reason was that they did not bid. That night the steers sold to the one firm by this cattle raiser were separated into seven equal lots and distributed among the seven different concerns.

In the face of this showing what do the republicans propose doing? They propose to authorize the secretary of commerce and labor to investigate in order to determine whether a trust exists. That fact is already clearly shown by the affidavits filed by the federal law officers in the injunction proceedings against the beef combine. These republican leaders realize, however, that something must be done by way of a pretense at remedying the evil, and so they have provided for an investigation that will be, necessarily, long drawn out. It is a wholly unnecessary investigation, because the facts are already clearly set forth in the papers filed in the federal court at Chicago.

If these republican leaders were sincere, if they really intended to curb the beef trust, instead of providing for a long drawn out investigation they would instruct the attorney general to commence criminal proceedings and call every one of these different trust magnates before a court of justice, under the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust law.

Too Much Power.

In his speech in the house of representatives, Mr. Martin of South Dakota said: "I am not one who goes into hysteria every time the word 'trust' is mentioned. The trust has come to stay. The question is: Will the trust let the rest of us stay?"

Commenting upon this statement, the Chicago Record-Herald says:

"This is the whole 'trust' question in a nutshell. No one doubts that the trust has come to stay. The public is now pretty well informed regarding the genesis of the trust. It is disposed to take a sane view of the industrial combination, recognizing it as an evolution of conditions which called for a

cheapening of the processes of production and distribution, and for an invasion of foreign markets against formidable competitors.

"But the question is 'Will the trusts let the rest of us stay?' Will they completely and entirely disregard the consumer? Will they combine in such a way as to fix and control the prices of the manufactured product? If they do, the monopoly thus created is so clearly a menace to the people as to leave no doubt regarding the necessity for federal regulation and control of such combines."

If it be true that the trusts have come to stay, then why protest against the inevitable consequences of the trust system? The Record-Herald confesses the serious results of the trust system when it says: "The question now is, 'Will the trusts let the rest of us stay?'"

If the trust has come to stay, then so long as human selfishness exists the men in charge of the trusts will use their power for selfish advantage. They will say just what they will pay for the things they must buy on the one hand, and on the other hand they will say just what must be paid for the things they sell; and the people will be ground between the upper and the nether millstone.

If the situation has progressed so far that the question now is, "Will the trusts let the rest of us stay," then it is high time the "rest of us" were doing something in the way of self-defense.

Relief is not to be obtained by telling these people that they may conspire in restraint of trade, that they may destroy the laws of competition, provided their conspiracy and their defiance are carried only to a "reasonable" extent. The coal barons and the beef trust magnates have not, in their opinion, been unreasonable; and yet, the people have complained bitterly of the actions of these men.

The public interests suffer whenever a few men have the power to fix prices. Private monopoly is intolerable and cannot be defended, even though the defense be made on the plea that the trusts are a part of evolution and have come to stay. If they have come to stay, then the people are at their mercy and the question will continue to be: "Will the trusts let the rest of us stay?" Whether they will let the rest of us stay depends upon how much the traffic will bear.

When Nick Biddle told Andrew Jackson that his bank had made and unmade United States senators and could make and unmake a president, "Old Hickory" replied: "If your bank can make and unmake senators and can make and unmake presidents, then it has too much power, and by the Eternal, I'll veto your charter."

Admitting that the trusts have grown to such enormous proportions that the question now is: "Will the trusts let the rest of us stay," then intelligent men must understand that the trusts have altogether too much power and instead of being tolerated, instead of being recognized in any degree, they should be destroyed by the strong arm of the law.

Cost of Imperialism.

In the discussion of the naval appropriation bill Senator Hale of Maine submitted a few remarks which ought to attract widespread attention. He objected to the plans of the naval board, saying that to carry out the plans of the board would soon require \$200,000,000 per annum. He thought that it might require as much as \$120,000,000 next year. He said:

"The naval officer is a naval officer pure and simple, and the American navy bounds his complete horizon. To him the navy is everything and the naval board has run too much in the direction of enormous ships. In some respects the naval officers are like the farmer who wants to raise the biggest pumpkins. They don't want Great Britain or Germany to excel the United States."

Of course, the naval officer wants the biggest navy in the world, but why should the taxpayers submit to such a scheme?

According to the press reports the senator "admitted that the last extensive additions to the navy had been made necessary by the acquisition of the Philippines," and he added that he would like to "get rid of those islands." He declared that in case of war we have to spend "hundreds of millions in the Philippines."

The cost of imperialism is enormous and it is collected from the whole people. The benefits of imperialism are insignificant and are gathered in by a comparatively small number of people.

The exploiters who are "developing" the islands will get rich; army contractors will make money; railroads and steamships will profit by transportation charges; shipbuilders and manufacturers of armor plate will fatten as the navy increases and a lot of new officers will find life positions, and the people will foot the bills. But expensive as imperialism is, when measured by dollars and cents the greatest injury is that done to the honor and reputation of the nation. We cannot sympathize with the oppressed anywhere without being rebuked by the oppressors and we cannot emphasize at home principles that we are violating in the Orient. The democratic position on the subject is being vindicated by events and sooner or later it will be accepted by the country. If the democratic leaders would only show a little moral courage and challenge the republicans to defend the moral principles involved in their policies we would soon have the republicans on the defensive. Instead of being a source of strength to our nation the Philippines are a source of weakness. They would be subject to attack immediately if we became involved in a foreign war and the natives would rise up against our carpet-bag government. Heretofore we have been invincible and have been saved the expense of a large army and navy. Now we are immensely weakened notwithstanding an increased army and navy expenditure of nearly one hundred millions a year.

Can this criminal and costly folly continue longer?

Why Not?

A reader of The Commoner directs attention to Attorney General Knox's report showing the expenditure of some \$25,000 out of the half million dollar appropriation for the prosecution of trusts, and points out that this report shows that the salt trust in California was arraigned under the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust law, the result being that the officers of the trust were fined \$1,000. This reader encloses an editorial clipping from the Louisville Courier-Journal, in which, after referring to the criminal proceedings against the salt trust, the Courier-Journal says:

"The inquiry is pertinent why something of the same sort has not been done in the case of the larger combinations which have been exacting excessive prices from consumers. What has happened to a little combination in California, of which few people ever heard, ought to have happened to the large and aggressive monopolies, if the law is to be made effective for the purposes for which it was intended. It is hard to believe that there is any intention to strike the big fellows."

The Courier-Journal is eminently correct. The Commoner has on several occasions directed public attention to the failure of the administration to enforce the criminal clause of the anti-trust law. Administration representatives boast that the proceedings against the salt trust provided material relief to the public. That being true, why would it not be proper to use the criminal indictment against the other and larger trusts whose managers conspire against the people?

Needless Investigation.

The house committee on interstate commerce has made a favorable report on the resolution introduced by Representative Martin of South Dakota, directing the secretary of commerce and labor to investigate the cause of the low prices of beef cattle, since July 1, 1903, and to determine whether there exists a beef trust.

We are told that this resolution will be promptly adopted, but, of course, whatever the motive of its introducer may be, its effect will be merely to delay the bringing about of substantial relief. There is no need of an investigation as to the existence of a beef trust, for the attorney general made affidavit in the injunction proceedings against the packing houses, that such a trust does exist. Instead of calling upon the secretary of commerce and labor to investigate the house would do better if it should call upon the attorney general to enforce the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust law against the beef combine. Nothing but vigorous criminal prosecution will provide a remedy in such cases as these.

These trust magnates care nothing for injunctions. They are not seriously disturbed by a comparatively small fine. If they were made to know, however, that they could not violate the law of the land without paying the penalty of imprisonment, they would very soon mend their ways.